

but also those of his old opponent Goodwin, who emphasized the injustice and irrationality of social institutions as a deterrent. It is strange to see these two names arrayed in support rather than in opposition, but there seems to be some justification for the statement. Secondly, there are some interesting references to the "Chinese Malthus," Hung Liang-chi, who lived from 1744 or 1746 to 1809. Hung's ideas are perhaps more original than those of Malthus, given their differing background, while Malthus's theory is more rounded and complete, but in some respects the similarities between the two are striking. A fuller account of Hung appears in the current issue of *Population Studies*.^{*} Thirdly, the author queries whether the new China of to-day can achieve a rate of economic growth greater than her current population increase. On the answer to this question will depend another matter that is crucial to-day—whether China's huge numbers are an asset to her or a serious liability.

P. R. C.

EDUCATION

Abercrombie, M. L. Johnson. *The Anatomy of Judgment. An investigation into the processes of perception and reasoning.* London, 1960. Hutchinson. Pp. 156. Price 25s.

IN THIS BOOK we are given the technique and the results of an innovation in the teaching methods—over a period of ten years—made available to senior medical students. The aim of the innovation is to enable the student to recognize and identify the personal barriers which exist in his or her mind and which so effectively block valid reasoning.

It is always difficult to understand why other people are so obtuse and incapable of accepting "truths" which are so patently obvious to one's self—but it is quite another matter to learn where we ourselves are colouring and selecting and distorting the data presented to us by others.

Mrs. M. L. Johnson Abercrombie is to be congratulated for her success in illuminating so many dark corners in the student mind and—if her book is read where it should be read—the illumination will not be confined to the students;

^{*} See the annotation on page 120 of the present number of the REVIEW.

but perhaps this is to ask too much if we recall the fixity which settles on individual mental "schemata."

Since the time of William James there can be no excuse for anyone not to be aware of the purely physiological barriers which exist to sound judgement, although even in this well-worn path some interesting new data is given, but much remains to be revealed in the area of what and why only particular fragments of available data are selected from a given situation by different individuals. The series of experiments described should well repay study by those on teaching staffs who are more interested in training students how to think rather than in telling them what to think.

It has always seemed to your reviewer that a university should have its Chair of Judgement. That is Judgement *per se*. In this book perhaps we have seen a beginning—certainly there is many a useful tip to the new Professor planning his programme.

C. W. USHER

ADOPTION

Rowe, Jane. *Yours by Choice. A Guide to the Adoption of Children.* London, 1959. Mills and Boon. Pp. 148. Price 15s.

AN AUTHOR who is equally sensitive to what it *feels* like to be adopted, what it *feels* like to offer a baby for adoption, what it *feels* like to adopt a child, has a unique contribution to make to the existing rather meagre and often biased literature on adoption. In her introduction to Jane Rowe's book, *Yours by Choice*, Clare Britton remarks on the authority and clarity of thinking for which the book, although addressed to adoptive parents, will be valued no less by all who play a part in the arrangements for adoption. The style is direct and conversational, but not emotional. The brief and carefully chosen illustrations have been drawn from first-hand knowledge of the parents and children with whom the author has "rejoiced and suffered," to whom she expresses her own indebtedness for allowing her to share in the unique and intimate experience of building a family by adoption.

Adoption is the grafting of a child on to a new family stock: "Adopted children and their

parents need to grow together." It is a process which has inevitably involved the breaking of one living relationship with the beginning of another. Adopted children have usually experienced more than one change of home before they are placed. It needs imagination on the part of the adopting parents, who usually expect to find out something about the inheritance of any child they hope to adopt, to recognize the importance of finding out about the child's environmental history since birth. "When he goes to a new home, he takes his past with him."

It is obvious that Miss Rowe has called on the professional and scientific knowledge of others when she answers questions about heredity, including epilepsy, mental defect, venereal disease and tuberculosis, and in the significance which she attaches to environment.

She is essentially practical as she gives the necessary detail in such matters as ways of obtaining an adopted child, the legal requirements, and when and how to tell a child that he is adopted. The last chapter is about the adolescent adopted child: "he has to settle his ideas about his natural parents." His questions must be answered so far as the facts make it possible to do so, but his most important question is unspoken: "Am I an acceptable, loveable person? Is it all right to be an adopted child?" Answers to that question may have to be implicit, but he must know by experience what it is like to *feel* accepted as an individual in his own right.

The delightful drawings of children beside each chapter title add greatly to the attractive appearance of this very wise book.

ENA M. STEEL

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